

**State Workforce Investment Board
Full Board Meeting Minutes
December 11, 2013**

The public meeting of the State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) convened at the Jackson Convention Center in Jackson, Mississippi on Wednesday, December 11, 2013.

Board members in attendance:

Jeffrey Allman	Robert G. Clark	H.S. "Butch" McMillan
Jackie Beasley	Chris Epps	Jay Moon
Brad Bounds	Steve Gray	David Stephens
George "Bunky" Butler	Mark Henry	Michael Thomas
Lee Carson	Charles Holder	Sherrye Thompson
Eric Clarke	Ed Langton	John Turner

There were approximately 30 guests in attendance.

Call to Order

- Chairman Jay Moon called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. and welcomed the board members in attendance.

Approval of Minutes

- The Chairman called for a motion to approve the minutes of the SWIB full board meeting of May 22, 2013. Mike Thomas made the motion to approve the minutes. David Stephens seconded the motion. There were no opposing votes and the minutes were approved.

Overview of FY 2013 Workforce Enhancement Training Fund (WET) and Projected Use of the \$8 million Supplemental Allocation to the WET Fund

- Dr. Eric Clark, Executive Director of the Institutions of Higher Learning, gave an overview of the Workforce Enhancement Training (WET) Fund established by the legislature in 2004 that directed a portion of taxable wages to go to this fund. The WET Fund is a fraction of the percentage of Unemployment Insurance (UI) payments transferred to the Community Colleges, which in turn is transferred for various programs' use. The Department of Employment Security collects the money which is deposited into the fund. Collections were above \$15 million in 2013. Dr. Clark stated that he is a timeless advocate for workforce development, and the fifteen community colleges are working together to encourage a consortia for such development.

Overview of the State Longitudinal Data System Website and Data Sets

- Dr. Mimmo Parisi, Professor and Director of nSPARC at Mississippi State University, gave a presentation on the history and development of the State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS), the development of the website, and the various data sets involved. The SLDS captures multiple years of information to determine whether dollars are spent prudently and usefully. Dr. Parisi explained that Life Tracks, 13 years of collaboration, plays an important role by providing data to early childhood, K-12, postsecondary education, and the workforce which can be used to make data-driven decisions to enhance student achievement and career-readiness. The SWIB and SLDS share common goals to improve career-readiness in the workforce and develop new job opportunities in the state. Jonathan Barlow, MSU, presented information on the new site which enables customers to look for jobs, explains what employers are looking for, and helps job seekers match their skills with employers' needs. Mark Henry, Executive Director for the Mississippi Department of Employment Security, advised there is a wealth of information on this App. It was designed to help Mississippians get jobs and obtain information on training requirements. MDES and nSPARC have collaborated to produce the first real App for job seekers. Kathy Gelston, Mississippi Development Authority, said that this is a great effort which needs to be promoted. Jay Moon agreed and stated that this App is the first and finest in the nation to date. He added that Governor Bryant supports all collective efforts which have gone into this project.

Overview of the recent Make It in America Grant to Mississippi State University

- Dr. Clay Walden, Director and Research Professor at MSU, explained to SWIB members about the Challenge grants. There were a broad number of collaborators which produced 70 proposals, but only 10 were funded and MSU was fortunate to be among that number. The focus of the grant is to accelerate job creation. Listening sessions to establish needs and wants of businesses will be held as well as a National Collaboration and “Tiger Team” approach to increase workforce practices and increase skills to close the gap that currently exist.

Overview of the new Itawamba Community College Manufacturing Solutions Center

- James Williams, Vice President of Economics and Community Services at Itawamba, presented information to the SWIB members about ongoing functions at the Manufacturing Solutions Center in Belden. The goal of the Center is to promote manufacturing as a viable and successful occupational choice which employs people and provides profit for companies. Several opportunities for training are available. The Center offers the EDGE program, which promotes discipline, goal setting, and employability skills. 21st Century Skills Labs use the Hol-Mac Tinkers Camp model, established by Charles Holder, and the Counseling to Careers (C2C) program teach manufacturing skill sets. A two-year Associate’s Degree in the Advanced Manufacturing Technician program is offered and provides classroom instruction and on-site experience. Graduates from this program may apply at Toyota, suppliers for Toyota, or other local manufacturers.

Summary of the Federal Reserve Bank/MMA Workforce Development Conference

- Jay Moon, President and CEO of the Mississippi Manufacturing Association, reported that workforce development is the number one issue for Mississippi, and this was the dominant foundation of the Workforce Conference. He presented an overview of globalization around the world and key trends in economic development. The business reality is that Mississippi must compete for more mobility of talent, and the best use of public policy is to drive workforce development toward collaboration between entities. A highly skilled and educated workforce drives innovation and is imperative for achievement. A Career Awareness Program has been developed and will be offered to young people at a formative age, as well as teachers and guidance counselors.
- A website is continually being updated in easy to understand language. The site shows what is offered from a workforce development standpoint, and showcases Mississippi, Community Colleges, Mississippi Development Authority, Mississippi Department of Employment Security, and others partnering with the workforce development effort.
- The Chairman advised that committees will soon be formed among SWIB members and polling will be done to determine where members’ special interests fall within the committees.
- Funding for staff to serve SWIB needs is ongoing, and Mr. Moon hopes to get this in place soon.

There were no announcements at this time. The meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

Overview of the State Workforce Investment Board

- Chairman Moon told the board that the SWIB was established in 2004 to maximize cooperation between state and public agencies and to improve the quality of the workforce. He described some of the duties and responsibilities of the board: planning, providing direction, and defining roles of various agencies. This will ensure consistent training, result-oriented performance, and customer choice. The group is an advisory board for the Governor. The SWIB website is www.swib.ms.gov.

Discussion followed regarding hiring challenges facing businesses, issues revolving around the dropout rate, and how career awareness and opportunities for education need to be stressed. SWIB members agreed that cities and counties should be part of the focus to become a “certified workforce community”.

Workforce Development Programs and Funding

- Mississippi Department of Employment Security

Mark Henry, Executive Director, provided an overview of the agency whose mission is “Helping Mississippians Get Jobs”. Several programs administered by the agency were mentioned: the WET Fund, OJT/ITAs, Work Opportunity Tax Credits, and the Pledge to Hire Vets.

- **Mississippi Department of Community and Junior Colleges**
Dr. Clark pointed out that the Office of Workforce Education is responsible for facilitating the use of the state’s resources to provide skills to workers and improve the quality of life for all citizens. He provided an overview of workforce training history, beginning with passage of the Workforce Consolidation Bill of 1999. Dr. Shawn Mackey and Dr. Mimmo Parisi also offered input regarding the comprehensive matrix of accountability that the Department of Community and Junior Colleges is continually performing.
- **Mississippi Development Authority**
Ms. Land, representing Executive Director Brent Christensen, reported to the SWIB that MDA ensures communication between businesses and workforce partners continues to grow in order to encourage businesses to locate in Mississippi. The MDA continually works to strengthen business relationships for the good of the state.
- **Mississippi Department of Education**
Mr. Mulvihill reviewed the Carl Perkins Federal Grant, State Career and Technical Funds and several other areas of responsibility under the MDE. He explained the Dual Credit/Dual Enrollment procedures and provided further overview of the MDE.
- **Mississippi Department of Human Services**
A synopsis of responsibilities under the purview of MDHS was provided by Rickey Berry. DHS has numerous duties, varying from weatherizing houses to housing juveniles. The agency’s mission is to provide socially responsible programs that promote traditional family values. DHS has partnered with MDES to offer services. Mr. Berry explained several of the programs supported by the Department of Human Services.

Life Tracks (State Longitudinal Data System)

- Dr. Parisi reported that the SLDS has been in the development stages for ten years. He explained how data collection, which comes from numerous entities, is used to determine where to put resources and how to target where the resources can best be used. Governor Bryant added that he sees Life Tracks as an extremely valuable tool. Dr. Laurie Smith, with nSPARC at Mississippi State, explained the legislation which took place in establishing SLDS and capabilities of the Life Tracks system.

Chairman Moon thanked the SWIB and advised that subcommittees are being established and inquiries will be sent to determine members’ interest in serving. He plans to have the subcommittees meet to promote legislation and workforce development, but not in a full board meeting arena.

The Chair advised the Governor’s Workforce Conference will be October 31, 2013 at the Jackson Convention Center. **Please note the date has been changed to October 29, 2013 at the Jackson Convention Center.** The meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m.